

THE LAST SHOT

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by FREDERICK PALMER

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I—At their home on the frontier between the Browns and Grays Marta Galland and her mother, entertaining Colonel Westerling of the Grays, see Captain Lanstron, staff intelligence officer of the Browns, injured by a fall in his aeroplane.

CHAPTER II—Ten years later. Westerling, nominal vice but real chief of staff, reinforces South La Tir, meditates on war, and speculates on the comparative ages of himself and Marta, who is visiting in the Gray Capital.

CHAPTER III—Westerling calls on Marta. She tells him of her teaching children the follies of war and martial patriotism, begs him to prevent war while he is chief of staff, and predicts that if he makes war against the Browns he will not win.

CHAPTER IV—On the march with the 53rd of the Browns Private Stransky, anarchist, derides war and played-out patriotism and is placed under arrest. Colonel Lanstron over-hearing, begs him off saying the anarchist will fight well when enraged and is "all man."

CHAPTER V—Lanstron calls on Marta at her home. He talks with Feller, the gardener. Marta tells Lanstron that she believes Feller to be a spy. Lanstron confesses it is true.

CHAPTER VI—Lanstron shows Marta a telephone which Feller has concealed in a secret passage under the tower for use to benefit the Browns in war emergencies, pointing out its value as being in the center of the fighting zone in case of war. Marta consents for it and Feller to remain for the present. Lanstron declares his love for Marta.

CHAPTER VII—Westerling and the Gray premier plan to use a trivial international affair to foment warlike patriotism in army and people and striking before declaring war. Partow, Brown chief of staff, and Lanstron, made vice, discuss the trouble, and the Brown defenses. Partow reveals his plans to Lanstron.

CHAPTER VIII—At the frontier the two armies lie crouched for attack and defense. In the town with the non-combatants fleeing from the danger zone. Martha hears her child pupils recite the peace oath.

CHAPTER IX—The Gray army crosses the border line and attacks. The Browns check them. Artillery, infantry, aeroplanes, dirigibles engage. Stansky, rising to make the anarchist speech of his life, draws the Gray artillery fire. Nicked by a shrapnel splinter he goes Berserk and fights—"all a man."

CHAPTER X—Martha has her first glimpse of war in its modern, cold, scientific, murderous brutality. She allows the telephone to remain.

CHAPTER XI—The Browns fall back to the Galland house. Stransky forages. Martha sees a night attack.

CHAPTER XII—The Grays attack in force. The call of the fight too strong for Feller, he leaves his secret telephone and goes back to his guns. Hand to hand fighting. The Browns fall back again.

"This is a little different," he began. She interrupted him.

"But the law of the Grays is that homes should be left undisturbed, isn't it? At least, it is the law of civilization. I believe you profess, too, to protect property, do you not?"

"Why, yes!" he agreed. He wished that he could get a little respite from the steady fire of her eyes. It was embarrassing and as confusing as the white light of an impracticable logic.

"In that case, please place a guard around our house lest some more of your soldiers get out of control," she went on.

"I can do that, yes," he said. "But we are to make this a staff headquarters and must start at once to put the house in readiness."

"General Westerling's headquarters?" she inquired.

He parried the question with a frown. Staff-officers never give information. They receive information and transmit orders.

"I know General Westerling. You will tell him that my mother, Mrs. Galland, and our maid and myself are very tired from the entertainment he has given us, unasked, and we need sleep to-night. So you will leave us until morning and that door, sir, is the one out into the grounds."

The staff-officer bowed and went out by that door, glad to get away from Marta's eyes. His inspection of the premises with a view to plans for staff accommodation could wait. Westerling would not be here for two days at least.

"Whew! What energy she has!" he thought. "I never had anybody make

me feel so contemptibly unlike a gentleman in my life."

Yet Marta, returning to the hall, had to steady herself in a dizzy moment against the wall. Complete reaction had come. She craved sleep as if it were the one true, real thing in the world. She craved sleep for the clarity of mind that comes with the morning light, in the haziness of fleecy thought, as slumber drew its soft clouds around her, her last conscious visions were the pleasant ones rising free of a background of horror; of Feller's smile when he went back to his automatic for good; of Dellarme's smile as he was dying; of Stransky's smile as Minna gave him hope; and of Hugo's face as he uttered his flute-like cry of protest. In her ears were the haunting calmness and contained force of Lanstron's voice over the telephone. She was pleased to think that she had not lost her temper in her talk with the staff-officer. No, she had not flared once in indignation. It was as if she had absorbed some of Lanny's own self-control. Lanny would approve of her in that scene with an officer of the Grays. And she realized that a change had come over her—a change inexplicable and telling—and she was tired—oh, so tired! It had been exhausting work, indeed, for one woman, though she had been around the world, making war on two armies.

The general staff-officer of the Grays, who had tasted Marta's temper on his first call, when he returned the next morning did not enter unannounced. He rang the door-bell.

"I have a message for you from General Westerling," he said to her. "The general expresses his deep regret at the unavoidable damage to your house and grounds and has directed that everything possible be done immediately in the way of repairs."

In proof of this the officer called attention to a group of service-corps men who were removing the sand-bags from the first terrace. Others were at work in the garden setting uprooted plants back into the earth.

"His Excellency says," continued the officer, "that, although the house is so admirably suited for staff purposes, we will find another if you desire."

He was too polite and too considerate in his attitude for Marta not to meet him in the same spirit.

"That is what we should naturally prefer," and Marta bowed her head in indecision.

"We should have to begin installing the telegraph and telephone service on the lower floor at once," he remarked. "In fact, all arrangements must be made before the general's arrival."

"He has been a guest here before," she said reminiscently and detachedly.

Her head dropped lower, in apparent disregard of his presence, as she took counsel with herself. She was perfectly still, without even the movement of an eye-lash. Other considerations than any he might suggest, he subtly understood, held her attention. They were the criterion by which she would at length assent or dissent, and nothing could hurry the Marta of today, who yesterday had been a creature of feverish impulse.

It seemed a long time that he was watching that wonderful profile under the very black hair, soft with the softness of flesh, yet firmly carved. She lifted her head gradually, her eyes sweeping past the spot where Dellarme had lain dying, where Feller had manned the automatic, where Stransky had thrown Pilzer over the parapet. He saw the glance arrested and focussed on the flag of the Grays, which was floating from a staff on the outskirts of the town, and slowly, glowingly, the light rippling on its folds was reflected in her face.

"She is for us! She is a Gray!" he thought triumphantly. The woman and the flag! The matter-of-fact staff-officer felt the thrill of sentiment.

"I think we can arrange it," Marta announced with a rare smile of assent. "Then I'll go back to town and set the signal-corps men to work," he said.

"And when you come you will find the house at your disposal," she assured him.

Except that he was raising his cap instead of saluting, he was conscious of withdrawing with the deference due to a superior.

In place of the smile, after he had gone, came a frown and a look in her eyes as if at something revolting; then the smile returned, to be succeeded by the frown, which was followed by an indeterminate shaking of the head.

CHAPTER XIV.

Tea on the Veranda Again.

It was more irritating than ever for Mrs. Galland to keep pace with her daughter's inconsistencies. Here was Marta saying coolly:

"Unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's! We have our property, our home to protect. Perhaps the Grays have come to stay for good, so graciousness is our only weapon. We cannot fight a whole army single-handed."

"You have found that out, Marta?" said Mrs. Galland.

"We have four rooms in the baron's tower and a kitchen stove," Marta proceeded. "With Minna we can make ourselves very comfortable and leave the house to the staff."

"The Gallands in their gardener's quarters! The staff of the Grays in ours! Your father will turn in his grave!" Mrs. Galland exclaimed.

"But, mother, it is not quite agreeable to think of three women living in the same house with a score of strange men!" Marta persisted.

"I had not thought of that, Marta. Of course, it would be abominable!" agreed Mrs. Galland, promptly capitulating where a point of propriety was involved.

When Marta informed the officer—the same one who had rung the door-bell on his second visit—of the family's decision he appeared shocked at the idea of eviction that was implied. But, secretly pleased at the turn of events, he hastened to apologize for war's brutal necessities, and Marta's compliance led him to consider himself something of a diplomatist. Yes, more than ever he was convinced of the wisdom of an invader ringing door-bells.

Meanwhile, the service-corps men had continued their work until now there was no vestige of war in the grounds that labor could obliterate; and masons had come to repair the walls of the house itself and plasterers to renew the broken ceilings.

All this Marta regarded in a kind of charmed wonder that an invader could be so considerate. Her manner with the officers in charge of preparations had the simplicity and ease which a woman of twenty-seven, who is not old-maidish because she is not afraid of a single future, may employ as a serene hostess. She frequently asked if there were good news.

"Yes," was the uniform reply. An unexpected setback here or resistance there, but progress, nevertheless. But she learned, too, that the first two days' fighting along the frontier had cost the Grays fifty thousand casualties.

"In order to make an omelet you must break eggs!" she remarked.

"Spoken like a true soldier—like a member of the staff!" was the reply.

In her constraint and detachment, they realized her conscious appreciation of the fact that in earlier times her people had been for the Browns; but in her flashes of interest in the progress of the war, flashes from a woman's unimpaired mind, they judged that her heart was with the Grays. And why not? Was it not natural that a woman with more than her share of intellectual perception should be on the right side? From her associations it was not to be expected that she would make an outright declaration of apostasy. This would destroy the value and the attractiveness of her conversion. Reverence for the past, for a father who had fought for the Browns, against her own convictions, made her attitude appear singularly and delicately correct.

The war was a week old—a week which had developed other tangents and traps than La Tir—on the morning that the first installment of junior officers came to occupy the tables and desks. Where the family portraits had hung in the dining-room were now big maps dotted with brown and gray flags. Portable field cabinets with sectional maps on a large scale were arranged around the walls of the drawing-room. In what had been the lounge-room of the old days of Galland prosperity, the refrain of half a dozen telegraph instruments made melody with the clicking of typewriters. Cooks and helpers were busy in the kitchen; for the staff were to live like gentlemen; they were to have their morning baths, their comfortable beds, and regular meals. No twinge of indigestion or of rheumatism from exposure was to interfere with the working of their precious intellectual processes. No detail of assistance would be lacking to save any bureaucratic head time and labor. The bedrooms were apportioned according to rank—that of the master awaited the master; the best servant's bedroom awaited Francois, his valet.

When Bouchard, the chief of intelligence, who fought the battle of wits and spies against Lanstron, came, two hours before Westerling was due, the last of the staff except Westerling and his personal aide had arrived. Bouchard, with his iron-gray hair, bushy eyebrows, strong, aquiline nose, and hawk-like eyes, his mouth hidden by a bristly mustache, was lean and saturnine, and he was loyal. No jealous thought entered his mind at having to serve a man younger than himself. He did not serve a personality; he served a chief of staff and a profession.

The score of words which escaped him as he looked over the arrangements were all of directing criticism and bitten off sharply, as if he regretted that he had to waste breath in commiserating even a thought.

(To be continued)

Money gets tight the same as brokers and bankers, about Christmas time.

Christmas Presents

Women's Felt Slippers

for your mother, your wife or your sister. Handsome styles in stock, with fur or ribbon trimming, many colors any size—can you think of a more useful or more comfortable gift.

95c

\$1.25

\$1.45

Women's Boudoir Slippers

Made of soft kid, or of warm felt, in pretty colors—your daughter will enjoy a pair.

59c

69c

\$1.00

Night Slippers

MENS

15c and 25c

WOMENS

15c and 25c

Children & Boys

10c

GRIESINGERS'



Christmas Presents

Men's Slippers

That man of yours—that father of yours—that best young man of yours, would be delighted with a pair of slippers—a fine gift. We hope you can come and see our display.

50c, 59c, 75c, 87c, \$1.00 and on up to \$2.00.

Why, it's a fact we sell more Christmas presents

every year—people buy useful presents. Whether

you buy or not, we want you to visit our store—

See the pretty and useful gifts you can find here.

GRIESINGERS'

Men's Felt Slippers

So warm and nice to sit around the fire with, or to hike down and build the fire with.

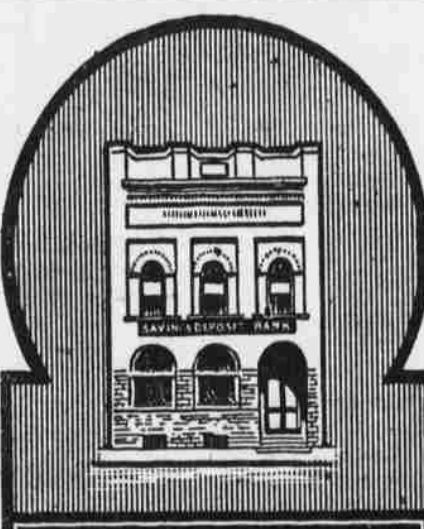
50c, 75c, \$1.00

Men's Felt Boots

\$2.25

Better than sold elsewhere at \$2.56.

GRIESINGERS'



SAVINGS
DEPOSIT BANK
MEDINA

What to Give

The holiday season with its gift problem is close at hand. Why not check off one or more of the names on your list of those to be remembered with the notation "A Savings account with the Savings Deposit Bank Company". No more satisfactory gift could be found, whether for a child or older person. Any sum from one dollar upwards may be deposited and a home savings bank will be furnished.



VALLEY CITY

Mrs. Louis Nilges is on the sick list. Mr. Leroy Ames spent several days the past week with friends in Cleveland.

The bazaar held at the St. Paul's church last week Wednesday was a success, everyone present enjoying the evening.

Mrs. J. A. Sailer and daughter Mazie spent several days in Cleveland the past week visiting relatives.

The injured of the vicinity are improving.

Mr. Jacob Walter of Cleveland spent his hunting vacation with Mr. George Mack. Every day the three would go hunting, but with no success for Walter until the last day of his vacation, when suddenly his eye fell upon a rabbit about three feet in front of him. He was so terrified at the sight of the rabbit that he was unable to shoot it, and had to call to Fred to do the deed.

Leo Heoffler of Ashland spent several days here this week with relatives.

Mr. Henry Doman died Dec. 7, aged 76 years. He was buried Thursday by Rev. George Kuehner from the Zion church.

A Masonic banquet was held in the K. O. T. M. hall Thursday evening. It was reported a grand affair.

The dance held here Dec. 3 was a success. A masquerade ball and oyster supper will be given Dec. 16. All are invited to come and mask. Prizes will be given.

Mrs. A. V. Schneider was called to Detroit last Tuesday, her brother, Paul Nentvig having suddenly died.

Woman Stomach Sufferer Now Can Eat As She Pleases

Mrs. Perkins Finds Swift Relief After First Dose of Mayr's Remedy.

Mrs. W. E. Perkins of Point Place, R. R. No. 7, Toledo, suffered for a long time from stomach troubles. She felt bad most of the time and could hardly ever find anything to eat that would agree with her.

She took Mayr's Wonderful Stomach Remedy and was surprised at the sudden restoration that followed. She wrote:

"I have been taking your remedy and it has done me so much good and I am so much better that I am eating most anything and everything that I used to eat years ago, before I knew what stomach trouble was. I am thankful that I heard of your wonderful medicine."

Similar letters have been written by thousands of people in all parts of the United States. Mayr's Wonder-

ful Stomach Remedy is known everywhere. The first dose proves—no long treatment.

Mayr's Wonderful Stomach Remedy clears the digestive tract of mucoid accretions and removes poisonous matter. It brings quick relief to sufferers from stomach, bowels and liver trouble. Many declare it has saved them from dangerous operations and many are sure it has saved their lives. Because of the wonderful success of this remedy, there are many imitators, so be cautious. Be sure it's MAYR'S. Go to all or any drug store and ask about the remarkable results it has been accomplishing in cases they know about—or send to George H. Mayr, Mfg. Chemist, 154-156 Whiting street, Chicago, Ill., for free book on stomach troubles and ailments and many grateful letters from people who have been restored. Any druggist can tell you its wonderful results.

Piano Bargain

STODART PIANO
and Aeolian Pianola

\$200

ORIGINALLY COST \$750

In Good Condition

EXAMINE AT

AMERICAN HOTEL, Medina

CHRISTMAS CANDIES CHRISTMAS PRICES

Do you know what that means? It means that we can please you both in quality and price. Come and be convinced.

ALUMINUM SPECIAL

One-fifth off on our aluminum ware for one week. This will be a good time to secure at least one or two pieces for yourself or as a present to a friend.

Cookers were \$2.00, now \$1.60
Double Boilers were \$1.90, now \$1.52
Double Boilers were \$1.75, now \$1.40
Kettles were \$1.00, now 80c.
Sauce Pans were 75c, now 60c.
Sauce Pans were 65c, now 52c.
Sauce Pans were 55c, now 44c
Cake and Pie Tins were 30c, now 24c.

Foote and Hartman

Telephone 2047

West Side Square

Christmas comes but once a year A poet sings, "Oh, what will the to make our pocketbooks feel queer. Christmas bring?" Bills, sir, bills.